File Display Commands

cat - concatenate a file

Display the contents of a file with the concatenate command, cat.

Syntax

cat [options] [file]

Common Options

-n	precede each line with a line number
-v	display non-printing characters, except tabs, new-lines, and form-feeds
-e	display $ at the end of each line (prior to new-line) (when used with -v option)

Examples

% cat filename

You can list a series of files on the command line, and cat will concatenate them, starting each in turn, immediately after completing the previous one, e.g.:

% cat file1 file2 file3

more, less, and pg - page through a file

more, less, and pg let you page through the contents of a file one screenful at a time. These may not all be available on your Linux system. They allow you to back up through the previous pages and search for words, etc.

Syntax

more [options] [+/pattern] [filename]
less [options] [+/pattern] [filename]
pg [options] [+/pattern] [filename]

Options

more	less	pg	Action
-c	-c	-c	clear display before displaying
	-i		ignore case
-w	default	default	don’t exit at end of input, but prompt and wait
-lines		-lines	# of lines/screenful
+/pattern	+/pattern	+/pattern	search for the pattern

Internal Controls

more	displays (one screen at a time) the file requested
<space bar>	to view next screen
<return> or <CR>	to view one more line
q	to quit viewing the file
h	help
b	go back up one screenful
/word	search for word in the remainder of the file
	See the man page for additional options
less	similar to more; see the man page for options
pg	the SVR4 equivalent of more (page)

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echo - echo a statement

The echo command is used to repeat, or echo, the argument you give it back to the standard output device. It normally ends with a line-feed, but you can specify an option to prevent this.

Syntax

echo [string]

Common Options

-n	don't print <new-line> (BSD, shell built-in)
\c	don't print <new-line> (SVR4)
\0n	where n is the 8-bit ASCII character code (SVR4)
\t	tab (SVR4)
\f	form-feed (SVR4)
\n	new-line (SVR4)
\v	vertical tab (SVR4)

Examples

% echo Hello Class or echo "Hello Class"

To prevent the line feed:

% echo -n Hello Class or echo "Hello Class \c"

where the style to use in the last example depends on the echo command in use.

The \x options must be within pairs of single or double quotes, with or without other string characters.

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head - display the start of a file

head displays the head, or start, of the file.

Syntax

head [options] file

Common Options

-n number	number of lines to display, counting from the top of the file
-number	same as above

Examples

By default head displays the first 10 lines. You can display more with the "-n number", or "-number" options, e.g., to display the first 40 lines:

% head -40 filename or head -n 40 filename

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more

Browses/displays files one screen at a time.

- Use h for help
- spacebar to page
- b for back
- q to quit
- /string to search for string

Example:

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more sample.f
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tail - display the end of a file

tail displays the tail, or end, of the file.

Syntax

tail [options] file

Common Options

-number	number of lines to display, counting from the bottom of the file

Examples

The default is to display the last 10 lines, but you can specify different line or byte numbers, or a different starting point within the file. To display the last 30 lines of a file use the -number style:

% tail -30 filename